

WORKFORCE OBSERVATIONS FOR WEST CENTRAL WISCONSIN COUNTIES

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State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development

Unemployment rates climb in state and region

Unemployment rates in every county of West Central Wisconsin increased in November as cold weather bore down on the region and Wisconsin. Statewide, 71 of the state's 72 counties reported a higher unemployment rate in November.

An increase in unemployment in November is typical in the region as seasonal jobs with construction, food processing and tourism end. In the nine-county area construction employment declined by 500 while manufacturing jobs fell by 250 and there were 350 fewer jobs with services industry employers.

Even though construction jobs declined in the Eau Claire-Chippewa metropolitan statistical area (MSA) employers in retail trade and government added workers in November. This produced an increase in both the number of unemployed and employed, although the increase in unemployment was larger and resulted in a higher unemployment rate.

The unemployment rate for the Eau Claire MSA increased to 4.7 percent in November, seasonally adjusted, from 4.5 percent in October. The current rate is lower than the 4.9 percent rate of one year ago, however. All of the metropolitan areas in Wisconsin reported a rise in unemployment in November. Three of the MSAs, however, including Eau Claire showed a reduction from one year earlier.

The metro rate remains lower than both the national and state seasonally adjusted rates of 6.0 and 5.1 percent, respectively. In November the national rate increased three-tenths of a percentage point while the Eau Claire and state rates increased only two-tenths.

Manufacturing jobs remain at their lowest counts since 1996 but have not declined further in the last three months. There are roughly 11,200 production jobs in the metro area and most of them are with durable goods employers.

Only one other industry, retail trade, had fewer jobs this November compared with one year ago. The most recent estimates showed an increase from October that was better than average. There are nearly 17,800 jobs

with retail trade employers in the Eau Claire-Chippewa area.

The increase of 400 jobs in retail trade and another 430 in government more than compensated for loss of construction jobs. Total employment in the metro area climbed to 82,200, not seasonally adjusted, in a total labor force of 85,800.

The labor force for the nine-county region expanded to include 233,250 residents in November. Total employment in the West Central region, however, declined while the number of unemployed increased. The result was an increase in the November unemployment rate to 4.5 percent from 3.9 percent in October. One year ago, the unemployment rate in the region was 4.3 percent.

Five counties in the region were among the 29 counties in the state that reported a lower unemployment rate in November compare with one year earlier. In addition to the metropolitan counties of Chippewa and Eau

Claire, Clark, Dunn, and Pepin had lower unemployment rates this November.

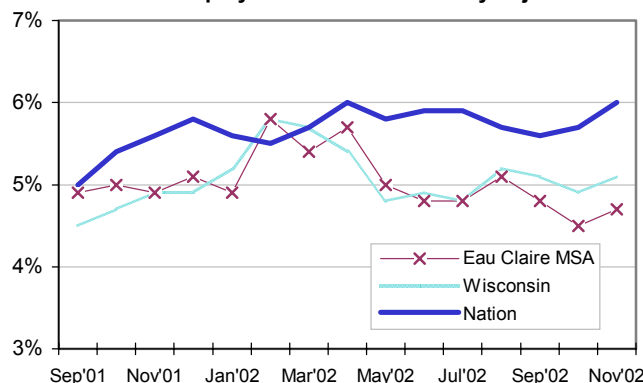
In Clark County the November unemployment rate of 5.4 percent was down from the 5.7 percent rate of one year ago. Construction employment remained strong in the county in spite of the drop in temperatures. In Dunn County, manufacturing employment increased and other industries remained strong. The November unemployment rate of 3.3 percent was not only down three-tenths of a percentage point from last year, it

was the third lowest rate in the state.

Although the Pepin County rate of 4.6 percent was lower than the 5.2 percent unemployed last November, it increased 1.3 percentage points from October.

The unemployment rate increased in Barron County from 4.0 percent in October to 4.8 percent in November. Among the reasons for the increase was the loss of 150 jobs from manufacturers, many of them seasonal. St. Croix County, also with a large manufacturing sector, had an unemployment rate in November of 5.5 percent, up from 4.9 percent in October. The increase was due to the loss of roughly 130 production jobs in manufacturing

Unemployment Rates-Seasonally adjusted



	Sep'01	Oct'01	Nov'01	Sep'02	Oct'02	Nov'02
Eau Claire MSA	4.9%	5.0%	4.9%	4.8%	4.5%	4.7%
Wisconsin	4.5%	4.7%	4.9%	5.1%	4.9%	5.1%
Nation	5.0%	5.4%	5.6%	5.6%	5.7%	6.0%

and another 130 jobs in services which includes the agencies that supply manufacturers with workers on a temporary basis.

In Pierce County, the unemployment rate increased from 3.7 percent in October to 3.9 percent in November. Pierce is among 18 counties in the state with an unemployment rate below 4.0 percent. Although there were some job losses in retail trade and services, government agencies more than compensated by adding jobs in November.

In Polk County the unemployment rate increased from 4.2 percent in October to 5.1 percent in November. The number of unemployed in the county increased as residents

were laid off from both local and out-of-state employers.

The number of residents filing claims for unemployment compensation increased in November in each of the nine counties in the West Central region. During the survey week in November there were 4,667 claims filed for unemployment benefits. That represents an increase of 797 from mid-October and is roughly 475 higher than one year earlier. The current count includes the many residents who are receiving benefits under the Temporary Extended Unemployment Compensation (TEUC) law that expires December 28, 2002. Although legislation to renew the law is pending it will not be voted on until January.

November 2002 Estimates

Not seasonally adjusted	Wisconsin	EC MSA	Barron	Clark	Dunn	Pepin	Pierce	Polk	St.Croix
Civilian Labor Force*	3,053,900	85,800	24,000	16,000	23,700	3,100	21,400	23,700	35,500
Employed	2,915,100	82,200	22,900	15,100	22,900	3,000	20,600	22,500	33,600
Unemployed	138,800	3,500	1,200	900	800	100	800	1,200	1,900
Unemployment rate(%)	4.5%	4.1%	4.8%	5.4%	3.3%	4.6%	3.9%	5.1%	0.1%
Total jobs, all industries**	2,867,500	78,600	21,600	10,100	16,700	2,100	11,300	15,400	27,900
Construction & Mining	130,760	4,010	870	660	680	170	470	810	1,710
Manufacturing	567,300	11,200	6,320	3,060	2,390	160	1,330	4,590	6,650
Transportation & Public Util.	131,750	3,320	740	450	540	90	510	480	1,130
Wholesale Trade	135,660	3,270	580	500	630	250	200	380	710
Retail Trade	519,310	17,780	4,170	1,300	4,310	460	2,390	2,700	6,380
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	153,940	2,990	410	230	450	70	340	490	1,050
Services	795,150	22,670	3,840	1,710	2,860	400	2,120	3,170	6,440
Government	433,680	13,410	4,650	2,150	4,810	550	3,900	2,750	3,800

Change from previous month

Civilian Labor Force*	200	700	-200	-200	300	0	100	-100	300
Employed	-12,400	200	-400	-400	200	-100	0	-300	100
Unemployed	12,600	500	200	200	100	0	100	200	200
Unemployment rate(%)	0.4%	0.6%	0.9%	1.2%	0.5%	1.3%	0.2%	0.9%	0.6%
Total jobs, all industries**	500	600	-100	0	200	0	0	-100	-200
Construction & Mining	-3,500	-300	0	0	-100	0	0	0	0
Manufacturing	-3,060	20	-150	0	20	10	0	-10	-130
Transportation & Public Util.	-880	-30	-10	-10	0	-10	-10	0	10
Wholesale Trade	170	0	0	-20	-10	0	0	10	0
Retail Trade	8,740	410	20	10	70	-10	-30	-20	30
Finance,Ins,Real Estate	100	50	0	0	10	0	10	10	0
Services	-7,600	-40	-30	-10	-10	0	-70	-70	-130
Government	6,480	430	50	50	220	10	130	20	30

Change from one year ago

Civilian Labor Force*	59,600	2,000	600	500	700	0	300	1,000	700
Employed	53,900	2,000	400	500	800	100	200	900	300
Unemployed	5,700	-100	200	0	0	0	100	100	400
Unemployment rate(%)	0.1%	-0.2%	0.6%	-0.3%	-0.3%	-0.6%	0.5%	0.2%	1.1%
Total jobs, all industries**	24,200	1,000	0	100	300	0	200	400	900
Construction & Mining	3,000	400	-100	100	0	0	0	0	200
Manufacturing	-8,840	-700	-130	-20	80	-10	-20	-60	-160
Transportation & Public Util.	-1,630	20	10	30	0	-10	-10	10	20
Wholesale Trade	-1,720	120	10	-40	0	0	-20	10	60
Retail Trade	3,010	-190	-90	10	50	-10	-10	60	440
Finance,Insurance,Real Estate	3,220	130	-20	0	30	0	20	30	90
Services	20,430	420	100	10	80	10	-20	140	190
Government	6,790	790	170	-20	60	0	190	170	120

* Includes participants residing in area. ** Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are NOT seasonally adjusted. Current month estimates are preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding. Calculations based on unrounded numbers.

Look for the most current Labor Market Information at: WWW.DWD.STATE.WI.US/LMI

Direct questions and comments to: **Beverly Gehrke, Labor Market Analyst**

Hayward Job Center, 15618 Wind Rose Lane, Suite 108, Hayward, Wisconsin 54843

715-634-5289 715-634-6094(FAX) e-mail: Beverly.Gehrke@dwd.state.wi.us